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ASSISTANCE IN MINE CLEARANCE

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/215, entitled "Assistance in mine clearance", by consensus on 23 December 1994. In the resolution the Assembly affirmed its deep concern at the tremendous humanitarian problem caused by the presence of land-mines and at the fact that the number of mines being laid each year exceeded the number that could be cleared during the same period.

2. The world-wide problem of land-mines has continued to grow in the past year, with the laying of new mines outstripping the efforts of the United Nations and other bodies to remove them. The ongoing unrest and recent conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Africa, Asia, the Caucasus and Latin America have all resulted in the creation of new mine pollution, with resultant dangerous long-term social and economic consequences for the civilian population. As internal conflicts and regional wars increase, so the popularity of the anti-personnel mine as a cheap and effective weapon of containment and terror becomes more firmly established. Mines continue to be laid without marking, fencing or mapping, in defiance of international law. Unexploded munitions continue to litter the battlefields, and the increasing use of bomblets and other sub-munitions delivered by rockets, artillery and aircraft has exacerbated the problem by increasing the amount of potentially lethal debris left after a conflict. The continuing instability of many areas of the world indicates that, without effective controls on the production, export, distribution and use of land-mines, the problem will continue to increase.

3. The General Assembly, in its resolution 49/215, called for an early international meeting on mine clearance. Pursuant to that request, the International Meeting on Mine Clearance was convened at Geneva from 5 to 7 July 1995. The Meeting comprised three elements: a high-level segment devoted to statements by Governments and organizations, which also provided an opportunity for participants to announce contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance and the United Nations de-mining standby capacity; nine panels of experts to discuss various specific aspects of the land-mine problem; and an exhibition focusing on the impact of land-mines on affected populations and international efforts to address the problem. The Meeting was set up as a forum to enhance international awareness of the different dimensions of the land-mine problem, to seek further political and financial support for United Nations activities in that field and to promote greater international cooperation. Ninety-seven Governments, 11 intergovernmental organizations, 16 United Nations bodies and 31 non-governmental organizations participated in the Meeting, which indicated the high level of interest in the matter.

4. In its resolution 49/215, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it before its fiftieth session a report covering the activities of the United Nations on assistance in mine clearance during the past year and on the operation of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

II. UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES IN PROVIDING ASSISTANCE IN MINE CLEARANCE

5. The United Nations has provided assistance to several countries in the past year. Where necessary and appropriate, this was done through the creation of programmes that integrated all mine-related activities, including mine surveys, training, clearance, mine awareness, medical treatment and rehabilitation. In order to carry out these multifaceted activities, the United Nations looks to a number of discrete United Nations entities that bring commitment and expertise to the mine-related activities in which they engage.

6. Within the United Nations, various entities have engaged in activities in order to carry out their various mandates:

(a) The Department of Humanitarian Affairs serves as the focal point for all land-mine related activities within the United Nations system, ensuring the formulation of consistent policies, the formulation of integrated mine-action programmes, the mobilization of resources for United Nations land-mine activities and the coordination of system-wide activities in this field;

(b) The Department of Peace-keeping Operations carries out mine-related activities in connection with peace-keeping missions. In conjunction with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, it assists in preparing plans for United Nations mine-action programmes. The Department advises on the practical implementation of those plans in the fields of training, survey, clearance, management and specialized equipment, and on the need for the development of new mine-clearance technologies;

(c) The efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to protect refugees and ensure their safe and voluntary return have focused primarily on mine-awareness activities, but have also, in exceptional cases, included mine-clearance, survey and marking activities;

(d) The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) engages in activities aimed at preventing injury to children in mine-affected nations, in particular through mine-awareness programmes. Where injury has already occurred, UNICEF assists children in their physical and psychological recovery, and their reintegration into society;

(e) The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), recognizing mine clearance, mine awareness and rehabilitation as development matters, has been involved in a range of activities, providing support to national mine-action offices, as well as mine surveys, clearance and training programmes;

(f) The World Food Programme (WFP) has undertaken mine-clearance projects to clear key access routes necessary for the delivery of food relief and often provides support to other United Nations mine-related efforts through the provision of food and logistical support;

(g) Other United Nations agencies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), have engaged in mine-related activities on a more limited basis.

7. In addition to the United Nations system, there are other organizations actively involved in alleviating the land-mine problem. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is very active in treatment and rehabilitation efforts. Numerous non-governmental organizations are involved in mine-survey, mine-awareness, rehabilitation and mine-clearance activities.

8. United Nations peace-keeping forces carry out mine clearance for two primary purposes. Firstly, mine clearance is often necessary to provide for a secure environment to engage in peace-keeping. Secondly, they have been extensively involved in large mine-clearance programmes, when de-mining is necessary to carry out another part of their mandates. For example, in Cambodia, the United Nations peace-keeping mandate included the conduct of elections, so polling sites were de-mined. In Angola, part of the United Nations peace-keeping mandate is to restore the free movement of people and to create an indigenous de-mining capacity, thus the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) will work closely with other United Nations agencies in the development of integrated programmes.

Specific country programmes

Afghanistan

9. There are an estimated 10 million mines strewn throughout Afghanistan, a country still troubled by internal conflict. Mines and unexploded ordnance are located in almost every conceivable type of terrain. The vast majority of mines were scattered at random, with no records indicating their precise locations. The United Nations estimates that over 150 of Afghanistan's districts are affected by mines. Mines are a particular problem on the country's borders, posing special challenges for the process of repatriating refugees.

10. The Mine Clearance Programme within the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination (UNOCHA) is the longest running United Nations-supported de-mining programme. There are four main components to the Programme: clearance, clearance training, mine-field surveying and mine-awareness education. The Programme is implemented by 2,925 workers employed by six Afghan non-governmental organizations, one international non-governmental organization and a relief agency of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. These organizations have clearly demarcated the division of labour by activity (i.e. training, awareness, clearance) and/or geography. The Programme continues to strive for standardization and standard operating procedures covering technical, operational and administrative matters have been published and are followed by the de-mining organizations.

11. Through the end of 1994, a total of 109,754 mines were cleared, 215,764 unexploded ordnance devices were destroyed, 54 million square metres of land were made safe, and about 2,497,400 people received mine-awareness briefings. The Programme's achievements in 1994 were double those of 1993, owing in large part to steady and increased funding. UNOCHA estimates that, at the rate sustained in 1994, and with continued funding, all priority clearance will be

completed by the end of 1997. Up to June 1995, mid-year targets were exceeded: 17,048,240 square metres had been surveyed and 12,347,349 square metres cleared, 270,000 civilians had received mine-awareness training and 1,555 field staff basic or revision training.

12. In 1994, the Programme, in collaboration with UNHCR, extended its mine-awareness activities to Afghan refugees returning from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mine-awareness teams are stationed at the border exit stations. Working with UNOCHA, an ILO project provided courses in 1994 for personnel responsible for training trainers of mine clearance and vocational training was provided to those who were disabled while conducting mine-clearance activities. The project was completed at the end of 1994 and proposals to continue the work have not yet received funding.

13. When months of street battles subsided in Kabul in March 1995, the Programme's teams identified 252 new mine-contaminated locations over a 22 square kilometre area of the city. Of this area, some 10 square kilometres have been categorized as high priority. The return of refugees to the city led to a concurrent rise in the number of land-mine casualties: 1,500 alone in the month of April, according to ICRC. The Programme currently has 10 mine-clearance teams, 7 mine-survey teams and 5 dog teams working in Kabul.

14. The total budget requirements for the Programme for 1995 are US$ 25,050,000. With $7,050,000 already available, the latest consolidated appeal, launched in October 1994, sought the remaining $18 million. As at June 1995, $11,126,686 had been received in response to the appeal. At the International Meeting on Mine Clearance (see para. 3), an additional $3,447,770 was pledged for UNOCHA and $625,000 was pledged for treatment and rehabilitation activities undertaken by WHO.

15. The Programme's objectives for 1995 include providing mine-awareness education to 900,000 civilians, on a budget of $900,000, and holding eight basic training courses for 240 students, eight pre-deployment courses, four team-leader courses for 80 students and four additional courses for 60 students, with a budget of $800,000. Twenty minefield survey teams will operate in 20 provinces, surveying 18 million square metres, on a budget of $1,600,000. The mine-clearance budget is $19,450,000, providing for 48 manual clearance teams to operate in 19 provinces, for a target area of 15,850,000 square metres.

Angola

16. Angola is estimated to have between nine and 15 million land-mines, laid during three decades of civil war. To date, these mines have caused as many as 70,000 amputees. Internally displaced persons and refugees began to return after the signing of the Lusaka Protocol (S/1994/1441, annex) in November 1994 making the task of humanitarian de-mining all the more urgent. Preparations to conduct a large-scale mine-action programme are now under way. The participation of a number of United Nations and non-governmental organizations illustrates the importance of a coordinated and integrated programme.

17. In March 1994, the Central Mine Action Office (CMAO) was established within the framework of the Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to

Angola (UCAH). Until June 1995, CMAO had been limited to coordination of mine-awareness programmes and the establishment of a general coordination structure, including a mine database, because of funding delays. In the absence of peace, gathering of minefield information was limited owing to concerns by the Government and the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) that such information would compromise their security. A mine survey commenced in June 1995. International non-governmental organizations have been assisting in surveying the quartering areas where Angolan military factions will be stationed. By August 1995, 10 of the 14 quartering areas had been surveyed for mines. Actual de-mining is being done by international non-governmental organizations, UNAVEM III engineer forces, government forces and UNITA.

18. CMAO has a planned operating budget of $29,494,000 for the first 12 months of operations, of which $17,089,800 is contributed through assessed contributions and a further $12,404,200 is to be raised through the consolidated appeal. Very little has been received in the appeal to date - only $1.2 million - but a number of Governments indicated at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance at Geneva that they would be willing to support specific de-mining projects. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs is currently working closely with CMAO to develop a list of high-priority de-mining projects.

19. CMAO, in cooperation with UNAVEM III, will focus on assisting the creation of an indigenous de-mining capacity through training of local personnel in different aspects of mine-clearance operations as well as in managerial skills related to those operations. The Mine Clearance Training School is being staffed and training of a corps of Angolan de-miners will commence in late 1995, if the budget is approved in due time. There are smaller, temporary mine-training schools established by non-governmental organizations at Kuito, Luena and Malanje.

20. With the signing of the Lusaka Protocol, the Government of Angola has assumed responsibility for all land-mine-related activities within Angola. The Government has set up the National Institute for the Removal of Explosive Obstacles, which will be responsible for the programme. In addition, the Government has designated approximately 1,200 former soldiers, from both its own and UNITA forces, to perform mine-clearance activities.

21. WFP, in coordination with UCAH, commenced mine-clearance activities in early 1995 along major transport corridors. The $2.4 million project has successfully opened the Malanje-Luanda and the Kuito-Lobito roads to the free movement of people and trade, as well as to humanitarian assistance deliveries that were previously made by airlift. This project included WFP collaboration with Norwegian People's Aid to conduct a six-week training session for 60 local de-miners and to undertake de-mining work in Malanje.

22. Mine awareness, coordinated by the mine-awareness officer in CMAO, began in September 1994, conducted by UNICEF and Angolan non-governmental organizations using national media and messages printed on bags and clothing. At the same time, UNHCR has developed a mine-awareness training programme, which will be implemented as part of the repatriation operation for Angolan refugees. A number of international non-governmental organizations are also engaged in mine-

awareness activities. CMAO will expand mine-awareness programmes to cover all refugee repatriation camps, internally displaced populations, United Nations and non-governmental organization personnel, and affected Angolan communities.

23. Mine-related medical activities are also being undertaken by United Nations agencies. In cooperation with the Government of Angola, WHO plans to strengthen the blood bank in Luanda to assure a safe blood supply for the expected surge in mine victims, as more and more refugees return. In April 1995, UNICEF established a programme to assist children traumatized by land-mine injuries.

Cambodia

24. Cambodia, which is infested with 8 to 10 million land-mines, has the highest percentage of amputees: an estimated 1 out of every 236 persons has lost one limb or worse. The Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC) was created by the Government in 1992 to provide an integrated national structure for building a counter-mine capacity. CMAC took over mine-clearance activities from the de-mining arm of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), which had conducted de-mining operations until the end of its mandate. The United Nations continues to be involved with the Cambodian programme through the provision of technical advice to CMAC. This project, implemented by UNDP, will terminate in April 1996.

25. Through mid-1995, the Cambodian mine-clearance programme has cleared a total of 62,000 land-mines and some 420,000 other explosive devices, or 16.5 million square metres. Over the past year, CMAC has cleared land more rapidly and more safely than ever before. Each CMAC platoon clears an estimated 500 to 1,000 square metres a day and by August 1995 de-miners had cleared 233 minefields. With the exception of 28 expatriate military personnel (to be decreased to 17 during 1995) and a few experts from non-governmental organizations, the CMAC staff is entirely Cambodian.

26. CMAC has held 323 mine-awareness classes, attended by 56,482 people. UNICEF and UNESCO have also been engaged in mine-awareness programmes in Cambodia. UNICEF provides support to the Children and Women's Prosthetic and Orthotic Programme of the Cambodia Trust, which specializes in provision of artificial limbs to women and children.

27. CMAC operations are funded through voluntary contributions, in response to an appeal issued jointly by UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in late 1993. The appeal sought $20 million for the two-year period from April 1994 to March 1996. As at August 1995, approximately $18 million was contributed or pledged.

28. Unfortunately, the conflict in Cambodia continues and the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea is still deploying mines in areas under its control. A disturbing sign is recent evidence that the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea is using home-made mines, constructed from fertilizer, lubricating oil and nails, that are as effective as imported ones. This increases the scale of the land-mine problem in Cambodia.

Chad

29. A United Nations mission was conducted in June 1995, at the request of the Government of Chad, to assess the extent of the mine problem. Consideration is now being given to possible activities.

El Salvador

30. Shortly after the Peace Agreements were signed between the Salvadoran Armed Forces and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional in January 1992, UNICEF initiated a programme designed to prevent accidental deaths from the estimated 20,000 mines laid in the country. The initial thrust of the Mine Awareness Programme (PAM) was to identify minefields and to post danger signs, to educate the population in mined areas to avoid contact with mines and explosives, and to support efforts to deactivate mines. At the same time, the Government of El Salvador engaged a private firm to undertake mine-clearance activities. This was completed in January 1994. While no land-mine accidents have been reported since January 1994, hand-grenades and other explosive devices have injured 271 people, including 42 children. As a result of this new development, the PAM Committee began a second phase of the project to rid El Salvador of the remaining explosive devices. Throughout the 15-month period envisioned for PAM II, public education efforts have been renewed.

Former Yugoslavia

31. It is estimated that millions of land-mines have been laid in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia. The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) troops are engaged in limited de-mining activities in order to carry out their mandate of providing for access for humanitarian convoys. UNPROFOR also provides some supervision of mine clearance done by local forces in non-contested areas.

32. With the Croatian Ministry of Education, UNICEF has prepared a manual for teachers and a video cassette for use in schools and for broadcast on the national television networks. The programme has already reached 400,000 children in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prior to that initiative, children were reported to be collecting land-mines, sometimes with tragic results.

Georgia

33. In August 1994, the United Nations undertook an assessment mission, which estimated that there were approximately 75,000 to 150,000 mines in Abkhazia, with more being laid, and reported two to four mine accidents every week. Although the political situation in the area did not yet allow the start of a full-scale mine-clearance programme, the mission recommended the immediate establishment of an information and coordination capacity, a mine-awareness programme, a mine survey, including mine marking, and low-scale emergency mine-clearance. The 1995 consolidated inter-agency appeal for the Caucasus region included those activities and sought funds in the amount of approximately $900,000. Thus far, lack of funding and political consent has delayed activities.

34. As part of the preparations for the organized return of internally displaced persons, UNHCR printed and distributed mine-warning materials (produced in both Georgian and Russian). In December 1994 and January 1995, tens of thousands of leaflets were distributed in schools and public places in and around the demarcation and cease-fire area between Abkhazia and Georgia. There are plans for a second project, modelled on the campaign in Mozambique, to train mine-awareness educators who will then prepare all 200,000 refugees inside Georgia for their repatriation to Abkhazia, and a third project to disseminate mine-awareness material to schools attended by internally displaced children.

Guatemala

35. In Guatemala, land-mines have prevented refugees from returning home and prevented those who have returned from initiating agricultural activities, thus extending their dependence on food assistance. A comprehensive mine-risk reduction programme for returnees, including marking and education activities, was initiated in Guatemala in 1994 by UNHCR, local non-governmental organizations and WFP, with the armed forces clearing mines in resettlement sites.

36. UNHCR selected future returnees to be trained in mine awareness and mine detection. The returnees searched out mines, marked them and then informed the Government for it to dispose of them. The UNHCR-funded segment of the programme was completed at the end of 1994. UNHCR's implementing partner has continued the mine-marking and education activities. UNICEF has also conducted some mine-awareness activities, modelled upon its successful El Salvador programme.

Mozambique

37. Mozambique's 16-year civil war has left an estimated 2 million land-mines spread throughout the nation. Current information suggests there may be some 2,000 mined sites, placed as defensive rings around population centres, on roads and paths, around economic structures and in agricultural fields. In the first 18 months of peace, at least 1,000 people were killed by mines. There are 8,000 amputees. Mine casualties account for 4 per cent of all surgical cases in Mozambican hospitals; that 4 per cent, however, consumes up to 25 per cent of all surgical resources.

38. Following the 1992 General Peace Agreement between the Government of Mozambique and the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) was mandated to deal with military, political, electoral and humanitarian issues - the latter through its humanitarian component, the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination (UNOHAC).

39. Delays in the implementation of the Mozambican mine-clearance programme provoked criticism from donor countries. In June 1994, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs established the Accelerated De-mining Programme. By November 1994, the Programme had trained and equipped 450 de-miners to clear mines in southern Mozambique. Following the expiration of the peace-keeping mandate, the Programme continued its operations as a joint Department of Humanitarian Affairs/UNDP programme. Apart from the mine-clearance activities,

the Accelerated De-mining Programme focused on the training of Mozambicans in supervision and management, with the objective of having its operations eventually run completely by local personnel. By August 1995, 5,000 mines, in an area totalling some 400,000 square metres, had been cleared.

40. The current Programme will continue until January 1996. Until then, it operates on a total budget of $2,502,149 and has sufficient funds for its operations. If the Programme is to continue to be financed by the United Nations after January 1996, funds for its operations in 1996 will be needed. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs has begun a review of the future of the Programme.

41. Other United Nations bodies are also involved in mine-clearance activities. UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, through a contracted consortium, undertook the clearance of 2,000 kilometres of priority roads from 1993 through its completion in March 1995. WFP involvement with emergency de-mining activities in Mozambique began prior to the establishment of UNOHAC, because of WFP involvement in food aid. In 1995, WFP commenced a $1 million road project that will open, clear and repair important supply roads.

42. The large number of Mozambicans in refuge in neighbouring countries meant that mine-awareness activities were of critical importance. Between 1993 and the end of 1994, UNHCR engaged in extensive promotion of mine-awareness activities to prepare more than 1.3 million refugees for repatriation. The UNHCR mine-awareness programme was carried out with the assistance of Norwegian People's Aid, to train teachers to work with other international non-governmental organizations to conduct mine education in refugee camps and locations in the four major asylum nations bordering Mozambique (Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

43. The Mozambique de-mining effort includes a number of initiatives in addition to those of the United Nations, including programmes by the United States of America, Norwegian People's Aid and Halo Trust.

44. In May 1995, the Government of Mozambique created the National Mine Clearance Commission, which will develop overall policies, strategies and priorities for the Mozambican mine-action plan.

Rwanda

45. When some semblance of calm returned to Rwanda in 1994, UNICEF discovered that children returning to Kigali were encountering mines in and around their homes and schools. Although UNICEF is rarely involved in mine clearance, it contracted an Ethiopian army team to clear mines around schools and health centres to permit their reopening.

46. In collaboration with UNESCO, UNICEF has undertaken a programme to prepare mine-awareness messages for use on the radio and to prepare materials for inclusion in its "School-in-a-Box" programme, a specially adapted education package for use in emergency situations. The UNICEF/UNESCO mine-awareness campaign has already reached 720,000 Rwandans between the ages of 7 and 14. It

is planned to continue the campaign with half-yearly repetition to ensure that the lessons are remembered.

47. Prior to 1994, Rwanda's problem with uncleared mines and unexploded ordnance was located mainly in the northern parts of the country. The conflict in 1994 spread the mine problem throughout the country. In 1994, the United Nations conducted an assessment mission, to determine the extent of the problem and whether the provision of international assistance was necessary, appropriate and possible. As a preliminary response, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has proposed the establishment of an information and coordination capacity to act as a focal point for all land-mine-related activity in the country, to conduct liaison between the United Nations and the Government of Rwanda and to coordinate mine surveys and mine marking. The United Nations is seeking the consent of the Government of Rwanda for such activities. The Government is considering its options.

Somalia

48. There are an estimated one million mines in Somalia, but, as with so many humanitarian activities in the country, international mine-related assistance has been limited by the ongoing insecurity, despite the presence of some Somali national de-mining capacity. Prior to the United Nations formal withdrawal from Somalia early in 1995, the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) employed Somali mine-clearers to conduct mine-clearance activities and provided training as appeared necessary. Since the departure of UNOSOM, United Nations agencies have pursued their humanitarian and rehabilitation activities wherever security conditions have permitted. UNESCO and UNHCR continue implementation of a mine-awareness programme, covering 36 towns and villages in north-west Somalia. The mine-awareness package developed by UNESCO for Somalia contains cloth charts, leaflets, a video and other mine-warning educational materials.

Yemen

49. In 1995, at the request of the Government of Yemen, the United Nations carried out an assessment mission, which resulted in the creation of a programme to advise the Government, which has responsibility for mine clearance. A land-mine information specialist provides advice to the Government on safe and reliable de-mining methods and is establishing a mine database to be used by the Government to better coordinate its mine-clearing activities. The army is estimated to have removed between 23,000 and 50,000 mines. The programme is financed by a contribution from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance.

III. UNITED NATIONS MINE-ACTION PROGRAMMES: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

50. Land-mines not only strike the individual with their lethal effects, but devastate whole nations by impeding the restoration of societal and economic life in the aftermath of armed conflicts, possibly for decades. Thus, the removal of land-mines is a prerequisite for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of a country. Agriculture cannot be revived without clearing the

land of mines; transportation becomes impossible because of mined roads and tracks; irrigation systems and critical industries become unusable because of land-mines; and medical systems are overburdened. It is this impact on all social and economic activities that makes mine clearance and other land-mine-related activities an integral part of the post-conflict peace-building phase of a nation. International assistance in mine clearance, to be truly successful, has to orient its activities within this context. From the very outset of the provision of assistance, the concept within which it operates must be focused on the restoration of an environment that allows a society to regain normal life.

51. This requires, firstly, the recognition that only a sustainable, long-term mine-clearance programme, including all related activities, will achieve this goal. This is why the United Nations approach to assistance in mine clearance focuses on national capacity-building. Secondly, because of the impact of land-mines on practically every level of the political, economic and social institutions of a country, programmes for assistance in mine clearance must be designed to deal with the problem in its totality, addressing all dimensions of the problem simultaneously and in an integrated and coordinated manner.

52. Mine awareness without mine clearance only delays accidents, it does not prevent them. Mine clearance without mine-awareness programmes allows needless deaths to continue. Mine surveys help to prioritize clearance activities and are also a good way to educate local populations. To lessen the suffering, to minimize the burden on the health care system and to improve communication with de-miners, mine-awareness messages should be part of basic elementary school curricula and part of agricultural training programmes. Knowledge of the appropriate care for mine injuries should be part of the basic medical and health care structures. Not only is medical treatment critical for victims of mine accidents, but the information gathered from hospitals gives an early indication of those populations most at risk. Mine clearance provides employment where employment is limited owing to mined land and infrastructure.

53. However, the reality is that, in the countries where these programmes have occurred thus far, the basic infrastructure of schools, health care programmes and training programmes are scarcely functioning. This means the building of national capacity is necessary in a wide range of areas. Thus, United Nations policy, wherever assistance is provided, is to train local personnel in all aspects of mine clearance and related activities, and to establish an indigenous mine-clearance capacity. This is the most successful, most sustainable and most cost-effective method of tackling large-scale de-mining operations.

A. Elements of mine-action programmes

54. The creation and implementation of a national programme is a complex task, because of the number of actors involved and the sensitivity and importance of assistance activities. Coordination is necessary between the host Government, the different United Nations entities with their distinct mandates, United Nations peace-keeping forces, various international and local non-governmental organizations, bilateral aid missions and, in many cases, former rebel forces.

55. Since a Government has primary responsibility for the safety of its citizens, it must remain the primary participant in the planning and execution of a programme. In situations where national government structures are relatively weak, as in a post-conflict setting, ensuring the integration of the mine-action plan within a Government is difficult but essential for the sustainability of the mine-clearance efforts.

1. Creation of a national capacity

56. As the United Nations plan is being conceived, the transfer of management of operations from a United Nations-supported programme to a national organization and from expatriate to national staff must be priority objectives. In Cambodia, the United Nations de-mining programme focused almost exclusively on the training of de-miners. The United Nations peace-keeping forces had no mandate to create an indigenous capacity. Therefore, as UNTAC prepared to depart, the need for a strong central mine-clearance administrative structure with Cambodian management was further reinforced. As a result of this lack of foresight, the transition from the UNTAC de-mining programme to the Cambodian civilian programme that eventually evolved was difficult, though ultimately successful.

57. With the Cambodian lesson in mind, the Angola and Mozambique peace-keeping operations had the creation of a national indigenous de-mining capacity, including the establishment of a centralized de-mining structure, as a mandated objective. In Mozambique, the creation of an indigenous de-mining capacity was centred in the United Nations humanitarian agencies in order to avoid later difficulties with the transfer from the primarily military culture of the United Nations peace-keeping forces to Mozambican civilians and national control.

58. While this particular programme was not very successful in its initial phase, the United Nations learned the importance of a better-developed headquarters and field structure to support a more sizeable organization than was then available. In Angola, the United Nations also established an assistance programme within its humanitarian office.

59. Since Cambodia, there has been increased emphasis on the training of management and administrative staff. While the management of the programme will initially be handled by expatriate personnel, concurrent training is provided to their local counterparts in all managerial, logistical, financial and administrative tasks of a programme. In Mozambique, there is an ongoing training programme for management staff. It is intended to follow the same path in Angola.

60. It is worth noting that working with national authorities is not always possible, as in Afghanistan, where no central authority existed at the commencement of the United Nations de-mining programme. Instead of a national central mine entity, a number of independent, cooperative Afghan organizations were created. With growing political stability, discussions will take place as to how to interface with national authorities on the future of the ongoing programme.

61. An additional advantage of the national capacity approach is that the cost is much lower when local personnel are responsible for de-mining activities - an expatriate de-miner may cost 30 times that of a local worker. Hiring local de-miners also provides much-needed employment opportunities in economies that are just recovering from war. In addition, bringing former enemies together in de-mining teams can be a small but significant confidence-building measure, teaching citizens of a nation once again to work together.

62. The establishment of a national mine-action plan will encourage, or even demand, common standards, procedures and techniques. Implementation of standard procedures at the outset facilitates monitoring, evaluation and identification of common shortcomings. The importance of standardization was highlighted in Cambodia, where international de-mining experts coming from various nations brought different training and clearance techniques to the classroom and to the field. Even when common materials were provided to the schools, each school provided a slightly different approach to de-mining, based in large part upon the nationality of the expatriate trainer. In the subsequent creation of a unified national de-mining force, units that should have been interchangeable could not work effectively together. Eventually common techniques and standards were agreed upon.

63. In Mozambique, the United Nations addressed this problem by creating a single de-mining training school for all United Nations-trained de-miners. Norwegian People's Aid used the same curriculum as the United Nations school, because both were relying on curriculum developed in Cambodia for manual de-mining techniques. Angola will have the standardized school approach, although, because of the size of the country, there may be more than one training site, with a staff member specifically designated to ensure standardized training. Drawing upon experience and expertise from United Nations de-mining programmes in Afghanistan and Cambodia, the Departments of Peace-keeping Operations and Humanitarian Affairs are further developing standardized curricula and training programmes of instruction for de-miners, which will be available to any organization.

2. Mine surveys

64. As a programme commences, a comprehensive mine survey is needed to assess the extent of the problem throughout the country and to provide minefield marking to warn local populations. The results of the general survey form the basis for determining the appropriate size and form of the mine-clearance programme and for establishing priorities for mine clearance and mine-awareness activities. The general survey is usually a basis for later detailed surveys to establish as accurately as possible the exact dimensions of each minefield or mined area, so that clearance teams can work efficiently. The critical component of the mine survey is the effective storage, dissemination and utilization of the collected data. In a United Nations mine-clearance programme, all available information is collected at the central mine office, where a mine database is set up and a detailed master mine map is compiled.

65. Mine surveys have been carried out using both expatriate and indigenous surveyors. Detailed surveying is a slow and hazardous job, requiring advanced

skills in mine clearance, as well as proficiency in cartography. This, perhaps, explains the widespread use of international organizations, which can commence surveying immediately and quickly start up a programme. In Mozambique and Cambodia, one international non-governmental organization conducted the entire survey; and in Angola a number of different international agencies are conducting parts of the survey, under the overall coordination of CMAO.

66. A different approach was used in Afghanistan. The United Nations provided training to Afghans on how to conduct a survey. They were then sent to their home districts, where they collected information and returned to the United Nations, where they received training on how to process the data collected. After being trained to conduct a detailed survey and to mark minefields, the general surveyors were subsequently sent back to collect more information. An Afghan non-governmental organization that specializes in surveys was formed out of the participants in the training programme.

3. Education and training in mine awareness

67. The primary objective of a mine-awareness education is to protect people from becoming mine casualties. To that end, populations at risk are taught how to identify land-mines, how to mark and report them, and how to minimize their chances of becoming victims while living and working in mined areas. An effective mine-awareness programme requires both the right message and the right medium. While the content of the mine-awareness message is important, the manner in which the message is conveyed will determine whether it confuses, educates or empowers. Specific information as to the types and likely locations of mines, including shape, size and colour, should be provided where possible and training materials should be specifically adapted for the culture, ethnicity, religion and customs of the target population.

68. Experience shows that community-based training activities are most effective. In the mine-awareness project in El Salvador, UNICEF used religious leaders, teachers, doctors and non-governmental organization staff in regular contact with the rural population who had relationships of trust and mutual respect and were thus in a position to communicate effectively with large numbers of people. A similar technique was used to educate Mozambican refugees. UNHCR selected a special personality profile of refugees for training as mine-awareness instructors. The profile included proficiency in Portuguese as well as one of the local languages.

69. Integration of mine-awareness education into the overall mine-action programme structure and further coordination of the mine-awareness programmes is the key. A fully integrated approach has yet to occur at more than a local level, although CMAO has a mine-awareness officer to ensure coordination between involved agencies. As a long-term objective, mine-awareness education must also be integrated into the country's education system in order to teach people in affected areas how to live with mines. Eventually, mine awareness must be decentralized to install local officials as the repositories of knowledge and awareness.

70. A number of United Nations entities and other organizations are actively involved in mine-awareness activities. Their experiences demonstrate that local conditions greatly influence the design of mine-awareness campaigns and that general parameters for the effective establishment of such campaigns have yet to be identified. The expert panel on mine-awareness education at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance (see para. 3) should be seen as the initiation of a process of bringing together experts from various organizations in this field to consider a more coordinated approach to the problem. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs is currently gathering all available information, curricula and so on on the issue. This library of compiled information may serve as a basis for further expert discussions to be convened by the Department.

4. Treatment and rehabilitation of land-mine victims

71. Land-mines are often designed to wound and maim, rather than kill. Medical treatment of land-mine victims is at best a short-term solution, which is unfortunately far beyond the capacity of most mine-affected States. Land-mine injuries place a huge burden on health care systems that are least equipped to handle them. Often, health care systems are devastated by war and the presence of mines continues to hinder their rehabilitation, as mined roads inhibit movement of medicines, health care professionals and vaccination teams.

72. The long and arduous physical rehabilitation therapy and the regular replacement of prostheses is a cost, both physical and financial, that many victims are unable to meet, but use of a prosthesis can contribute substantially to the return of the amputee as a functioning member of the family and community. United Nations efforts at rehabilitation recognize that physical and psychological rehabilitation must be combined with social and economic reintegration through income-generating activities and social support.

73. There is continuing development and standardization of the most effective medical treatment for land-mine victims and of training for paramedics. Ongoing discussions as to the most useful form of prosthetic devices parallel strenuous efforts to make the prosthetic devices accessible and affordable to amputees. As with other aspects of a mine-action programme, it is critical to nurture indigenous capacities in the manufacturing and fitting of prostheses and in rehabilitation therapy.

74. All United Nations mine-clearance programmes have provisions for medical evacuation and paramedics attached to each team or site. This often means that the de-mining team has more medical facilities than the local community within which it operates. Although neither paramedics nor the team's transport can be made available to the community at the expense of preparedness for accidents at the site of de-mining, the de-mining teams will often work with the local community to provide medical services. Aside from providing much needed medical care, these activities create an important link between de-mining activities and the local community, in turn increasing mine awareness among the community and ensuring that de-miners have the full cooperation of the community.

B. Coordination of activities

75. Addressing a land-mine problem in a comprehensive and integrated manner requires effective coordination. Lack of coordination will lead to duplication of effort or lack of attention to a particular aspect and will diminish the outcome of the programme for the affected country. A great deal remains to be done to coordinate the activities of the various United Nations bodies better and to tap fully their knowledge and resources in the conduct of mine-action programmes. Experience has led to certain de facto working arrangements within the United Nations system in the creation of programmes and the provision of mine-related assistance. Both UNHCR and UNICEF have developed substantial institutional expertise in the provision of mine-awareness training, WHO clearly has the capacity for coordinating mine-related medical support and UNDP has developed some ad hoc expertise in the administration and management of programmes. The Department of Peace-keeping Operations, in cooperation with interested Member States, has developed a substantial mine-clearance training capacity.

76. There are other organizations that have developed considerable expertise, some of which have worked closely with United Nations programmes. ICRC is active in treatment and rehabilitation of land-mine victims, as are some non-governmental organizations, while others have conducted mine-awareness programmes, mine-clearance training, mine surveys and mine clearance.

77. Direct Government-to-Government assistance, while rare, should also be coordinated with United Nations programmes.

78. It has fallen upon the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to coordinate these capacities in designing and implementing United Nations programmes. To enhance this cooperation further, the Department will develop more formal working arrangements with all parties in order to outline more clearly the role each agency will play in the provision of assistance in mine clearance.

79. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs drew upon experience when it established CMAO in Angola, investing it with responsibility for the coordination of all mine-related activities in the country. To that end, the Office liaises with the Government, coordinates the operations of the UNAVEM III training school and the deployment of the students who graduate from it and will make arrangements for the school to continue its operations after the end of the peace-keeping mandate. CMAO coordinates all mine-awareness activities in Angola, whether they are being carried out by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations. It will prioritize clearance operations, in consultation with the various implementing agencies, and will seek continued donor support for all activities in concert with all involved parties. This may prove to be a model to be adapted for future programmes.

IV. RESOURCES FOR UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMMES

80. Once a land-mine problem has been identified and the provision of assistance has been approved by the host Government and the United Nations, large amounts of funds are critical, especially at the commencement of a programme. Immediate access to funds allows early mine-awareness education programmes, the prompt establishment of mine-clearance training schools and the timely procurement of equipment. These start-up costs are often very high, because a de-mining programme may need to create almost all of its own infrastructure. It must have its own communication system, procure the necessary equipment for mine-clearance activities and ensure the availability of medical equipment and expertise to deal with mine injuries.

81. Funds for United Nations mine-clearance and other land-mine-related activities are generally raised and will continue to be raised through assessed contributions for peace-keeping operations and through the consolidated appeal process. In my last report (A/49/357 and Add.1 and 2), I emphasized the need to obtain additional resources in order to increase the number of countries that could receive United Nations mine-clearance assistance and to enhance significantly the overall United Nations de-mining programme capacity. Accordingly, on 30 November 1994, I established the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance and entrusted the Department of Humanitarian Affairs with its management.

A. Consolidated inter-agency appeal process

82. In countries that are facing complex emergencies, funds are generally raised through consolidated inter-agency appeals, including resources for land-mine programmes. Consolidated appeals will remain a main source for financing such programmes. To date, projects have been included in the consolidated appeals for Afghanistan, Angola, the Caucasus, the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

B. Assessed peace-keeping contributions

83. In Cambodia, Somalia, Mozambique and now Angola, the peace-keeping forces were mandated to carry out mine-clearance operations and their budgets included funds for mine action. In Cambodia, UNTAC, trained local de-miners who, following the expiration of the peace-keeping mandate, became the core of the CMAC staff. In Angola, the peace-keeping operation will set up a mine-clearance training school in cooperation with CMAO and will equip and field the students. In the first stage, graduates of the school will carry out mine clearance for the needs of the peace-keeping operation. In the long run, they will become the core of the national humanitarian mine-action programme. This linkage between a peace-keeping operation and a humanitarian programme is of critical importance. This is why it will be extremely advantageous for future peace-keeping operations to continue to include resources for the early establishment of an integrated de-mining programme. It is also important to link the peace-keeping mine-clearance activities closely to the humanitarian activities from the very beginning, to ensure a coordinated approach to the land-mine problem and the continuance of mine-related activities following the peace-keeping mandate.

C. Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance

84. The start of programmes has often been delayed because of lack of quick access to promised funds from consolidated appeals and regular peace-keeping assessments. The Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance has become the central tool for financing mine-action activities in a timely and effective manner, as it is designed to have a balance of funds readily available for quick utilization.

85. The purpose of the Trust Fund is to facilitate, in particular, the launching of mine-clearance operations. It is during the establishment of mine-action programmes that most costs occur. It is therefore essential that the Trust Fund have sufficient resources to provide mine-action programmes with the necessary start-up finances when other resources are not immediately available. Seed money, or start-up funds, are required for such activities as the establishment of field-level coordination mechanisms, the creation of a systematic capacity to gather and collate mine information, mine surveys, the establishment of a training school, the early procurement of mine-clearance equipment, mine-awareness programmes, key clearance operations and rehabilitation activities. For all these activities the Trust Fund functions as a complementary mechanism to the above-mentioned funding sources. In addition to its utility as seed money, the Fund may be used for assessment missions, bridging of funding delays during implementation of a programme, public-awareness campaigns, headquarters support and the expansion of existing programmes.

86. One of the objectives of the International Meeting on Mine Clearance was to solicit funds for the Trust Fund. Strong support was expressed for the financing of land-mine-related activities and it was gratifying that over $20 million was pledged to the Fund. A number of countries also indicated willingness to make contributions to it in the near future. While a great deal more funding is needed to meet all the pressing demands for assistance in mine clearance, these contributions will enable the United Nations to initiate and support de-mining operations in a more timely and effective manner.

87. Since its inception in November 1994, only a few projects have been financed from the Trust Fund, as the contributions received prior to the International Meeting on Mine Clearance were limited. With a contribution of $150,000 from the United Kingdom, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs set up a programme to provide technical advice in mine clearance to the Government of Yemen. Two specialists were sent to Yemen to gather all available information on land-mines in that country and to set up a database. They also advised the Government on mine-clearance operations. In May 1995, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs funded a research project on the socio-economic impact of land-mines. Contributions from New Zealand and the United Kingdom provided the necessary funding for the establishment of the Mine Clearance and Policy Unit within the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

88. In the coming months, the priority of United Nations mine-action activities will be the furtherance of the comprehensive programme in Angola. In February 1995, a consolidated inter-agency appeal for Angola was launched, including mine-action projects that require $12.4 million for a 12-month period.

While these projects will be funded through contributions towards the appeal, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs will provide the resources for priority projects from the Voluntary Trust Fund to ensure that the comprehensive programme for Angola is implemented in a timely manner.

89. The value of the Trust Fund cannot be overestimated. As the number of mine-clearance programmes will continue to grow over the coming years and as those already in operation will require funds for a long time, it is most important to sustain this tool through enduring financial support from the international community. Therefore, those Member States who indicated support at the International Meeting are urged to continue to do so and those who have not yet made a contribution are urged to consider doing so.

90. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs will, in accordance with the terms of reference of the Trust Fund, issue annual reports on its operation, describing projects financed from it and prioritizing projects to be funded in the coming 12 months. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs will, on the basis of the utilization of the Trust Fund, seek resources for its replenishment on an annual basis.

D. De-mining standby capacity

91. The establishment of comprehensive indigenous programmes requires, in particular in the first stages, a large number of expert personnel and specialized equipment. In-kind contributions from Member States have been an important asset to all three major mine-clearance programmes of the United Nations. In Afghanistan, personnel seconded by Member States to work with UNOCHA began pioneering the mine-clearance and mine-awareness training methods that have since become normal operating procedures for the United Nations. In Cambodia, this experience was repeated when military personnel contributed to UNTAC established de-mining schools and began training indigenous de-miners. Following the expiration of the UNTAC mandate, expatriate expert personnel seconded to the United Nations helped run CMAC. In Mozambique, again, military personnel from four Member States established and ran the Mine Clearance Training School. Following the expiration of the peace-keeping mandate in Mozambique, five expatriate staff contributed to the United Nations established the Accelerated De-mining Programme. In Angola, a de-mining school is being set up by UNAVEM III. Troop contributions from Member States will staff this school, which will become the core of the mine-clearance programme in Angola.

92. However, while mechanisms and structures to facilitate the contribution of personnel, equipment and expert advice have been most fully developed in the context of troop contributions to peace-keeping operations, this is not the case in other United Nations operations. This is particularly relevant to United Nations humanitarian programmes, which are sometimes established in areas where no peace-keeping mandate exists (e.g. Afghanistan) or are required to continue after a peace-keeping mandate ends (e.g. Cambodia, Mozambique). In the past, this has caused considerable problems and delays in creating the necessary legal and administrative arrangements to permit donor States to contribute personnel and other resources to United Nations programmes.

93. It was for this reason that the Secretary-General asked the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to establish a standby capacity for de-mining and other land-mine-related activities. Such a standby capacity would allow the United Nations to draw more effectively upon the resources of personnel, facilities, equipment, and services that are available from Member States for such programmes.

94. The following elements could be furnished by in-kind contributions:

Personnel

95. Experts are needed to assist in training local personnel in all the aspects of a programme. There is also a need for personnel or units capable of being deployed to accomplish specific tasks, such as conducting assessment missions, mine survey and reconnaissance, providing medical support to mine-clearance operations, establishing communications networks or conducting a variety of training missions.

Equipment

96. The provision of appropriate vehicles and communication equipment, medical supplies and hospital equipment and so on will significantly reduce the start-up costs. Specialized mine-clearance equipment that meets the standards set by the United Nations is also required. Such equipment could include mine detectors, prodders, personal protective gear, grapnels, detonators and explosive charges. The provision of equipment to support the deployment of de-mining platoons, such as tents, water trailers, cooking gear, blankets, clothing and beds, will eliminate the need for such equipment to be bought by the programmes themselves and therefore speed up deployment.

Facilities

97. The designation of facilities within a donor State could also be a valuable contribution. The provision of facilities for the specialized training of key personnel would provide a flexible method of improving their training. In addition, Member States could provide facilities to allow for testing and analysis of mine-clearance equipment, as well as research and development establishments to work directly in support of United Nations programmes.

98. At the International Meeting on Mine Clearance, the establishment of a United Nations de-mining standby capacity was considered at the plenary session. Four Governments announced specific contributions, worth $7 million, to the standby capacity. An additional 15 Governments announced their willingness to contribute. These announced and indicated contributions included the provision of expert training personnel, equipment, the provision of training facilities, facilities for treatment of land-mine victims and the provision of mine-clearance teams.

99. Details of contributions to the United Nations de-mining standby capacity will be kept in the United Nations Land-Mine Database, which has a specific module for the purpose. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs will now set up the necessary legal and administrative arrangements to make the standby capacity

fully operational and will consult with Governments on the detailed requirements for this standby capacity.

V. ACTIONS FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION

100. Over the course of the past few years and as a result in large part of the work of the Secretariat and several United Nations agencies, international awareness of the global land-mine crisis and consequent support for the mine-related activities of the Organization has risen significantly. However, during the past year, approximately 100,000 land-mines were removed, while between 2 and 5 million mines were newly laid. These figures emphasize that this is not a static problem, but a humanitarian crisis that is growing rapidly. They also indicate that mine clearance alone, even at the increased rate that it is hoped to achieve, will not solve the problem. Equally important are increased and concerted political efforts to stop the further proliferation of land-mines.

101. The political goal to halt the further spread of land-mines requires increased action in the field of public advocacy. Increasing knowledge of this enormous humanitarian crisis will prepare the ground for effective political and legal initiatives to solve it. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs is well placed to fulfil this role and to coordinate system-wide activities in this area. In concert with other United Nations organizations, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs will develop a strategy of public advocacy initiatives.

102. An important landmark in the Organization's efforts to raise international awareness of the land-mine problem was the International Meeting on Mine Clearance (see para. 3). The fact that this Meeting brought together almost 100 Governments and 60 organizations shows the growing consciousness of the land-mine crisis. It was the first time that so many politicians and experts from all over the world had discussed the land-mine issue in all its dimensions.

103. Several important political issues were raised at the Meeting. Almost all participating delegations emphasized the need for strengthening international humanitarian law to stop the further spread of these weapons. In particular, most delegations pointed to the importance of the upcoming review conference of the States parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, Protocol II of which deals with the use of land-mines and booby traps, and the urgent need to strengthen its provisions. In the meetings of the group of government experts to prepare the review conference, several key issues such as the applicability of the Convention to internal conflicts, the detectability of all anti-personnel mines and the requirement that all remotely delivered mines must contain self-destructing mechanisms were agreed upon. It is hoped that they will be included in the revised Convention. However, other important issues remain to be resolved. Efforts must be made at the review conference to strengthen the Convention and the land-mine Protocol by adding strong enforcement provisions, by achieving meaningful restrictions on the transfer of land-mines, their component parts and land-mine technology; by including obligatory agreement to permit inspections to determine compliance and appropriate sanctions for non-compliance. Also, strong legal protections should be added to article VIII of Protocol II, extending its

provisions to cover humanitarian personnel working in mined areas. The Convention should also include provisions to institutionalize its review.

104. Most delegations at the International Meeting agreed that the Convention would only be a viable tool if all Member States adhered to its provisions. So far, only 50 Member States are party to the Convention.

105. Another important issue that was commonly mentioned by delegations at the International Meeting was the question of export moratoriums on land-mines. This is the third year that the issue will be on the agenda of the General Assembly. In its resolutions 48/75 K of 16 December 1993 and 49/75 D of 15 December 1994, the Assembly called on Member States to agree to a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines and urged Member States to implement such a moratorium. So far, only some 20 countries have enacted an export moratorium. Some countries indicated at the International Meeting that they would implement such a moratorium shortly.

106. Notwithstanding the importance of these efforts, it is emphasized once again that the ultimate goal must be a total ban on the production, transfer and use of land-mines. Only a total ban will stop their spread. A ban is easier to implement and easier to monitor and verify. Moreover it would guarantee, more than any other measure, that the indiscriminate killing and maiming of innocent civilians will eventually cease. A number of countries and organizations called for such a ban in their statements at the International Meeting. Some referred to this as the ultimate goal or the desired objective towards which the United Nations should work, while others considered that the time had already come for such action.

107. In the past few decades, the use of land-mines has changed from strictly defensive to offensive and they are being used, in particular, to terrorize civilian populations. In low-intensity and low-budget internal conflicts, land-mines have become a weapon of choice because they are both cheap and effective. In this connection, it would be an important step forward to extend the applicability of the Convention to internal conflicts. However, in most internal conflicts, some of which have lasted for decades (e.g. Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique), it will be difficult to determine compliance with the provisions of the Convention. Only a total ban would eliminate the further use of these weapons. The random use and long-lasting effects of land-mines put them in the category of those which kill and maim indiscriminately. In this connection, attention is drawn to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which was signed in Paris in January 1993. This Convention has set a precedent for meaningful restrictions on these kinds of weapons. Article I of the Convention binds States never to develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain or transfer chemical weapons and never to use them.

108. Non-governmental organizations have been an essential element of the international campaign to stop the further proliferation of land-mines and have played a strong role in public advocacy on the issue. One example is the International Campaign to Ban Land-Mines, which comprises more than 300 organizations from all over the world. The United Nations should seek closer cooperation with non-governmental organizations in this field.

VI. CONCLUSION

109. The United Nations approach to a land-mine problem is based on the principle of capacity-building. The responsibility to clear land-mines rests ultimately with the Government of an affected country. Moreover, mine-clearance programmes are likely to continue for decades. The United Nations is therefore assisting Governments to create sustainable national capacities that will continue as national development programmes after the direct support for mine-action programmes through the United Nations has ceased.

110. Land-mines affect all sectors of societal and economic life. The United Nations, therefore, follows an integrated approach to mine clearance, addressing the problem in its various facets and involving a number of agencies of the United Nations system. To consolidate this approach, it is essential to have one central office responsible for the coordination of all activities related to mine clearance. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in consultation with other United Nations entities, will further develop the framework for United Nations mine-action programmes. At the field level, it will fulfil this responsibility by establishing the appropriate capacities to coordinate all such activities within United Nations programmes.

111. As experience increases and the number of actual and prospective programmes multiplies, the United Nations is moving to standardize many elements of its activities, including survey, information collection and management, and training and management modules. Care should be taken to ensure that the standardized models are flexible enough that they can be tailored to the requirements of each national programme, as no one model will answer the requirements of all operations.

112. Mine clearance is slow, dangerous and expensive, and to clear all the mines already laid cannot be accomplished within the limitations of current funding and technology. The international community must now make increased efforts to develop de-mining technologies that will improve the speed and the safety of de-mining without significantly increasing the cost. Member States are strongly urged to expand research and development on humanitarian mine-clearance techniques and technology, with a view to developing practicable, low-cost and sustainable equipment. Member States need to work together to achieve this and the United Nations is examining methods by which it can establish and promote such international collaboration.

113. The Central Land-Mine Database of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, which was on display at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance, has received very positive recognition as a valuable information tool for mine-related activities. All organizations involved in mine-related activities are asked to work closely with the Department to increase the database's capacity further. The Department is also in the process of establishing a central repository of mine-awareness materials to facilitate the exchange of information, which would increase the effectiveness and usefulness of ongoing awareness work. In addition, a central repository for information on mine-clearance techniques was called for recently at the International Meeting on Mine Clearance.

114. In the past few years, the international community has increased its support for United Nations programmes. However, it is apparent that this is only the beginning, as the problem is one of enormous proportions. Deeper national commitment and a greater level of resources is needed to prevail against the land-mine threat and Member States are therefore urged to sustain their support for assistance in mine clearance.

115. With the $22 million pledged at the International Meeting, the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance will now become fully operational. This central Fund is intended to be a complementary funding source for United Nations programmes, as it is designed to finance activities in the area of mine clearance when other funds are not yet available or not readily available, in order to accelerate the United Nations response to a land-mine problem. The Secretary-General will report periodically on the status of the Trust Fund and will suggest ways to maintain it at an appropriate level for effective operation. In the meantime, Member States, in particular those who have not yet done so, are urged to provide their support to this important endeavour.

116. The de-mining standby capacity has been widely welcomed by Member States and is seen as an important adjunct to the Voluntary Trust Fund. The United Nations is engaged in ongoing discussions with Member States regarding the most efficient method for its operation. Member States are strongly urged to give all possible practical support to enable the United Nations to establish the standby capacity at a viable level.

117. The International Meeting on Mine Clearance was a success on many levels. It generated critically needed financial resources and political support. It raised the public's consciousness about the global land-mine crisis and initiated and strengthened contacts between all those involved. Consideration will be given to the convening of a follow-up meeting within the next two years.

118. Mine clearance alone will not solve the land-mine crisis. Significant political efforts to stop the further proliferation of mines will have to be undertaken. As a priority, the upcoming review conference of the States parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects must take significant steps to strengthen the provisions of the land-mine Protocol. This would include adding strong legal protections for humanitarian personnel working in mined areas; achieving meaningful restrictions on the transfer of land-mines, their component parts and land-mine technology; obligatory agreement to permit inspections to determine compliance; and appropriate sanctions for non-compliance. The Convention should also include an institutionalized mechanism for review. The land-mine Protocol will only be a valuable tool when adherence is universal.

119. In its resolutions 48/75 K and 49/75 D, the General Assembly called for a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines and urged Member States to implement such moratoriums. So far, only some 20 Member States have answered this call. Those Member States who have not instituted moratoriums are strongly urged to consider doing so.

120. The Convention and export moratoriums are helpful in limiting the proliferation of land-mines. However, as emphasized on many occasions, only a total ban will effectively stop their spread once and for all. A ban is easier to implement and easier to monitor and verify. All Member States should work towards this goal. The use of land-mines, their production and transfer must be banned and those which are stockpiled must be destroyed.